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A

Funeral Sermon,

ON THE

DECEASE

OF

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

Mrs. ELIZ. SHOWER.

Who died the 24*th.* of *Auguſt*, 1691.

By JOHN SPADEMAN, *Miniſter of the* Engliſh *Church in* Rotterdam.

LONDON:

Printed for *Joſeph Watts*, at the *Angel* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard, 1691.

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To my Honour'd FRIEND

Mr. SHOWER.

SIR,

WHen after an unpleasing seperation, the Providence of God gave opportunity of renewing our Converse, in your Habitation; I promis'd my self an unmix'd satisfaction, during my stay with you: And as none is more oblig'd to rejoyce in all the Good, which you, or yours are partakers of; so none could be more heartily dispos'd to do it. Indeed the hopes of enjoying your Society sweetned the fatigues of a Voyage, which (after many years absence) I lately made unto my own Country: In which I was truly delighted to find, that not only your Person and Ministry were acceptable and useful, but that there was a prospect that God would make your House to grow. But when I was preparing to return I perceived that God had brought me to mourn with you, under a most afflictive Providence: In which though my Character had made me unfit to present comfort to you; yet few of your friends had more light to discern the deepness of your Wound, and greatness of your Loss. For the intimate Friendship between us, and our cohabitation in Holland, gave me opportunity of understanding the worth of Her, whom now you lament. Tho this Consideration, as it makes your Tryal greater, renders your Resignation more acceptable to God, and useful to Men.

To part with an ordinary Possession with willingness, is a

1 Pet. 1. 20. *kin to that* Patience *which is exercis'd under merited punishment, which in the Apostles judgment hath no* Glory, *or* Commendation *in it: But 'tis an Heroick spirit, a resemblance of that Faith which dignifi'd the Father of all who believe, to give up a rare and endearing Treasure: And if any Consideration hath strength to work this Noble Disposition in our Souls, that which is taken from the* Glory *of God, and the Redeemer hath: 'Twas this which led, my thoughts unto the Meditations in the following Discourse, which tho much below the dignity of the Subject, am willing to make thus publick, that they may be a lasting Monument of the Gratitude and Respect I owe unto your Deceas'd Consort, and with the Divine Blessing may be useful to those who may be call'd unto like Tryals.*

Many of your Brethren would have performed this Service, with far more justice unto both the Subjects of the Discourse, then one who is in a journying State: But when your self, and some near Relatives desired this last Office, I was not unwilling to comply; especially having the advantage of knowing by how singular a Providence, your Marriage-Union was brought about, and how happy it was to you both.

I need not tell you how this sorrowful Event makes the thoughts of my intended Voyage much more uneasie to me, who must leave so dear a Friend depriv'd of his delightful Half: *But an* Interest *in the* whole *Deity, (who cannot die) will abundantly compensate this loss, which together with your long continuance in Temple-Service, and the desirable success of your Labors, is with utmost earnestness pray'd for, by*

Sir,

Your Affectionate, Faithful

Servant,

J. Spademan.

A Funeral Sermon, Preach'd, &c.

John XI. 4.

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto Death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

THE first hearing of these Words, which speak of *Sickness* and *Death*, may give some Indication of the sorrowful occasion, that hath drawn more than usual numbers unto this *Place*: from which it hath pleas'd the All-wise God, to remove *One*, who was a principal Orna-

ment of it; *One* whoſe conſtant Attendance, and Chriſtian Deportment in it, carried an exciting Influence unto all who were Witneſſes of 'em. And therefore it is no ſmall loſs unto this whole Society, that they ſhall no longer enjoy the advantage of ſuch an Example, but even the privation of ſuch whoſe Lives were Exemplary, is capable of affording very conſiderable advantage: As we know that not only the Light of the *Heavenly Bodies*, is uſeful unto this lower World, their *Eclipſes* have their advantages too, which are therefore thought worthy of peculiar Obſervation. It hath been a received Opinion, that the *Eclipſes* of the Sun and Moon have an Inſtructive ſignification, by which the Inhabitants of the Earth are warn'd and admoniſh'd. The truth of that Opinion hath been queſtion'd, but 'tis certain that the Death of a Chriſtian, who did *ſhine as a light in the World*, hath an Inſtructive Language, and is proper to teach very profitable Leſſons unto them who ſurvive. Such Providences do indeed call unto mourning and ſorrow, but this is not the principal intention of them; there is ſomething of far greater importance to employ our minds, on ſuch ſad occaſions, and that is to receive the Spiritual Inſtruction that is

then

then presented unto us. It hath been counted an instance of the folly of some Superstitious Heathens, that they would make a hideous noise whenever they saw the Sun, or Moon darkn'd, and variously express'd their fears of losing those Luminaries, but made no useful enquiries into the Causes and Nature of those *Phenomena*. And 'tis very reproachful unto professing Christians, when they imagine that a passionate sorrow is the only, or chief business that the Death of Christian Friends calls on to: Our Deportment on such occasions, should correspond with our Christian Hope, which assures us, that they who *are fallen asleep in Christ* are not lost, (which in the Apostles judgment is a Self-evident absurdity, 1 *Cor.* XV. 18.) A deceased Christian is not only more safe, but far more happy and honourable than *he* or *she* was in this World: so that they need not our tears; which yet on other accounts are just and reasonable, but they must not hinder our serious enquiries into the Nature and Uses of such sorrowful Object. When therefore we have (in a living Example in the Deceased Mrs. *Show-*) we are oblig'd to make such enquiries, with relation unto *her* Death, that we may find some considerable and lasting advantage

from

from it; and in order unto this, I have thought these Words of the Redeemer, spoken upon a like occasion, would afford seasonable Meditations, that may assist us to improve the late sorrowful Providence. And when I have laid down the *general* Instructions contain'd in 'em, I shall endeavour to apply 'em unto the *particular* subject of our Sorrow.

To understand the *grounds* and *occasion* of the Words I read to you, we need only look back to the few Verses which precede the Text; and in the first Verse we find, that a Friend and Favourite of Christ, *Lazarus*, the Brother of *Martha*, and *Mary*, is arrested by a threatning Sickness. *The favour and friendship of Christ do not exempt from sickness and death.* A *Lazarus* whom Jesus loved, is sick and dieth. His Sisters seem to have concluded, that the affection which Christ had for their Brother, should have secur'd him from these Calamities; and ('tis probable) they thought, that nothing but the Distance of place, could hinder Christ from relieving their Brothers Case, which therefore they take care to acquaint him with, and send this sorrowful Message unto the Redeemer, *Lord, behold he whom thou loves*

loveſt is ſick, Ver. 3. They chooſe indeed, the fitteſt Argument to plead on this occaſion, with Chriſt, when they repreſent to *him* the Intereſt that their Brother had in *his* peculiar Affection They don't ſay, He 'who is our Brother, and Beloved by us, 'or He who loveth thy Perſon, and Service, is ſick,: They knew, that ſuch Conſiderations (tho very forcible among men) could have but little weight upon *Him*, who cannot be made a Debtor by all the Kindneſs and Service that any can expreſs toward him. No, they rightly conclude, that the Redeemers love is free, and without any Obligation, and muſt be the only Original of all that Relief, which he at any time beſtows. Thus far, I ſay, theſe Siſters were in the right; but the particle *Behold*! (which is a Note of Admiration) intimates the Miſtake which they were guilty of, and that they were *ſurpriz'd* at the ſickneſs and danger of their Brother, becauſe he was one whom Jeſus loved. Had this been the Caſe of a *Scribe*, or a *Phariſee* (two Orders which Chriſt had no kindneſs for) this would not have appeared ſtrange unto them, as it did, that one whom Chriſt loved, ſhould languiſh under a painful and

threatning Diſeaſe. No queſtion they had often ſeen and heard the Redeemer expreſſing a peculiar kindneſs unto their Brother, whoſe ſickneſs and danger made him now a Spectacle of Pity: And they knew not how to reconcile theſe two together, and therefore were inclin'd to hope, that his love unto their Brother (as ſoon as he had an account of his danger) would induce him to make the greateſt haſte to viſit, and heal him, (both which he had done unto others who were ſtrangers.) But *He* intended to do neither, he determin'd to delay his viſit unto *Lazarus*, until he had been four days Dead: But tho he would not heal and recover ſick *Lazarus*, he ſends a moſt excellent Remedy unto his Siſters, to cure their miſtakes, to eaſe and heal their minds; which was the intention of this Reply unto their Importunate Meſſage. *This ſickneſs is not unto Death, but for the Glory of God*, &c.

In which we are called to conſider. 1. *The Manner.* 2. *The Deſign.* 3. *The Import of this Anſwer.*

I would make a few Reflections upon the two former, and then ſhall inſiſt upon the laſt, as moſt ſutable to our preſent Affair.

I. As to the Manner of this Anſwer: 'Tis eaſie to perceive the obſcurity, and dubiouſneſs of the former part; *This Sickneſs is not unto*

Death

Death: For the Event did (at leaſt) ſeem to contradict the literal meaning of this Declaration, which expreſly denies, that the ſickneſs of *Lazarus* was unto Death, and yet *Lazarus* dyeth: This ſeeming contradiction, muſt render this part of the Anſwer dubious and dark, unto thoſe to whom it was ſent Indeed notwithſtanding this obſcurity, there was a moſt certain Truth in this part of the Anſwer, which ſpeaks of ſuch *a Death*, as truly anſwers that Character, viz. Such a Privation of Life, as puts a final Period unto it; on which account it can truly be ſaid of the Dead, *That their places know 'em no more, and that they go the way whence they ſhall not return*: As alſo, *That they ſee corruption.* *Acts* XIII. 36. The Body quite loſing that Organization, that makes it a fit Habitation for a human Soul: This is the primary and proper notion of Death, and under which the Spirit of God ſpeaks of it: (See *Rom.* V. 12, 14. 1 *Cor.* XV. 21, 26, 54, 56. Not to mention ſeveral other places.) Unto *ſuch a Death* the ſickneſs of *Lazarus* was not; his Death was not a final Period, but only a ſhort interruption or ceſſation of Life, which (like ſome Rivers which run under ground for a ſpace) only for a while diſappear'd, and then was again brought to light. This being granted,

Job. VIII. 10. XVI. 22.

we cannot deny, that there is ſome darkneſs in the manner of expreſſion. Had it ſo pleaſed the Redeemer, he could have ſpoken in a much plainer Language, he could have ſaid, 'Tho this ſickneſs ſhall deprive *Lazarus* of his 'Life, yet it ſhall ſoon be reſtored to him again; 'tho he ſhall truly die, yet he ſhall not long 'remain under the power of Death; for I de-'ſign to work a Miracle to raiſe him from 'the dead: Thus could the Redeemer have expreſſed himſelf, had it ſo pleaſed him, but he chooſeth to ſpeak obſcurely not only to theſe Siſters, but afterward to his Apoſtles, when he ſaid, *Our friend* Lazarus *ſleepeth, ver.* 11. Which Metaphorical and Dark way of ſpeaking led them into a miſtake, as we read *ver.* 13. Many other inſtances of this kind might be produc'd, as that which this Evangeliſt relateth *Ch.* XVI. 16, 17, 18. And as the Language, ſo the Carriage of Chriſt hath obſcurity in it; his *ways are unſearchable, and his footſteps are not known*, both with reſpect unto viſible Providences, and inviſible dealings with the Soul.

Many there are, whom Chriſt really loveth, who walk in darkneſs, are brought into a kind a Labyrinth, where they are ſtrangly perplext, and are tempted to conclude, that their Lord hath quite forſaken, and caſt 'em off, when he

he retains the kindeſt and moſt gracious purpoſes toward 'em. As God did toward *Abraham* when he commanded him to go out of his Country, and yet did not acquaint him with the Place which was deſign'd to be his inheri- *Heb.* XI. 8.
tance. Thus was *Abraham* tryed, and ſo are the Children of *Abraham*; as indeed this conduct of God is admirably ſuted unto the ſtate of Probation in which we now are. All that darkneſs and perplexity which at any time we are brought into, are deſign'd by God, to try and diſcover the ſincerity and conſtancy of our obedience. And 'tis our grand concern to ſtand out this Tryal, to undergo this Probation aright; and then whatever darkneſs there is now in the dealings of Chriſt, he will after a while ſcatter every Cloud, and will be an everlaſting Light unto us. 'Twere eaſie to make large Reflexions upon this Subject, but your own Meditation can ſupply this defect; Nor may I dwell long upon the

II. Obſervable in the Text; The *Deſign* of this Anſwer made by Chriſt, which was to afford preſent ſupport unto the dejected Siſters of *Lazarus*. He whoſe eye diſcerns the moſt hidden and diſtant objects, know how their tender hearts were diſquieted, and that ſuch a ſpectacle as a diſeaſed dying Brother muſt

wound

wound and afflict their Souls, and the more when their expectations were disappointed, as to the speedy visit of Christ. 'What (might they 'be apt to argue) not make so charitable, so 'seasonable a visit, to one whom he loveth, 'to one who needs his help, and must pe-'rish without it? Is this kindness, to neglect 'a distressed Friend, till *Life* and all be gone? Such disquieting thoughts, would begin to rush into, and disorder their minds: Now 'twas to still this Tempest, that the Redeemer sends this reply to 'em. *This sickness is not unto Death, but for the glory of God*, &c. *q. d.* 'Tho the danger, and progress of 'this sickness joyn'd with my seeming neglect 'of their Brother, will be an occasion of 'trouble unto them; sorrow and fear will take 'hold of their Spirits, yet let not their hearts 'be troubled, there is no just ground of dis-'quieting fear; notwithstanding the dismal 'appearances, this matter will have a happy 'and honorable issue. *When our Lord Jesus doth not grant the expected relief, yet he always provides support, and consolation for his faithful followers.* When *He* determin'd to send away the Multitudes who had follow'd him into the Wilderness, he resolves that he will not send 'em away fasting, least they should faint

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by the way; *Mar.* XVI. 32. Tho they muſt for a time be deprived of his preſence, yet he takes care, that they might not faint, and periſh. This was his Carriage toward his Apoſtles in general, and more particularly toward the Apoſtle *Paul*, who when he *beſought the Lord thrice that the Meſſenger of Satan might depart from him.* Tho this Requeſt was not granted, tho the Thorn in the Fleſh was not removed, yet this moſt ſupporting anſwer was given to him: *My grace is ſufficient for thee,* 2 *Cor.* XII. 9. ſometimes the Carriage of Chriſt bears an aſpect of unkindneſs and neglect; but even at ſuch a time, his Heart is fill'd with Love, and his Hand is employ'd to ſupport. 'Tis worthy our notice, what care the Spirit of God hath taken, to remove the ſuſpicion of unkindneſs in the Redeemer, toward his Friend *Lazarus*, whom he refus'd to Viſit and Recover, as his Siſters requeſted and expected; for in the Verſe which immediately follows this Anſwer of Chriſt, the Evangeliſt adds this cautioning Remark, *Now Jeſus loved* Martha, *and her Siſter, and* Lazarus. His not complying with their intimated deſire (of having their Brother ſpeedily recover'd) did not proceed from unkindneſs, or want of affection (tho there was an appearance of them.) No, he bore the ſame Love unto a ſick and dying *Lazarus*, as if he had

had wrought a Miracle to prevent his Sickneſs and Death. 'Twere eaſie to enlarge upon this Head, but I muſt proceed unto the

III. And principal Obſervable in the Text, The *Import* and *Senſe* of this Anſwer: And if it be remembred that the Sickneſs of *Lazarus* was mortal, there will be found theſe two general *Propoſitions* contain'd in it.

I. *The Sickneſs and Death of thoſe who are the Friends of Chriſt, do bring a peculiar Glory unto God, and the Redeemer.*

II. *This one Conſideration is ſufficient to quiet and ſupport the followers of Chriſt under thoſe ſorrowful Providences.*

I need not ſpend time to prove how evidently theſe Truths are contain'd in this Anſwer of Chriſt, which tho given in a particular Caſe, yet carrieth ſuch a general Inſtruction, as reacheth unto Chriſtians in all Ages of the World. 'Tis granted that there were ſingular circumſtances that attended the Sickneſs and Death of *Lazarus*, and a moſt glorious Miracle was wrought in raiſing him from the Dead: But notwithſtanding, there are other grounds which juſtifie the general concluſions which are drawn from the Words. In which 'tis manifeſt (as has been obſerv'd) our Lord deſign'd to quiet and eaſe the troubled minds of *Lazarus*'s Siſters, who had now a ſorrowful proſpect of loſing a beloved Brother.

Brother. And in order to this, he thought it enough (without mentioning his Miraculous raiſing from the Dead) only to inform them, That the threatning Sickneſs of their Brother was *for the glory of God, and that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.* This one conſideration when it finds due entertainment in, and hath a right operation upon a believing Soul, is able to ſtill all the diſquieting motions that ſorrow and fear have raiſed there.

I have not deſign'd a diſtinct handling of theſe two Propoſitions, 'twill be as uſeful to joyn both together in a plain and inſtructive method; and therefore ſhall,

1. Give a ſhort account of the *Glory* of God and Chriſt.

2. Shew how the *Sickneſs* and *Death* of thoſe who are the Friends of Chriſt does contribute unto it.

3. On what accounts the conſideration of this hath ſuch *a quieting* and *ſupporting Influence* upon a Chriſtian; and afterward draw ſome inſtructive *Inferences* from theſe memorable words: As to the

1. The Nature of that Glory which belongs unto God and Chriſt: On which I ſhall only make a very few Remarks, be-

cause it may be hoped that few Christians are unacquainted with this common Subject.

Glory in its general Idea or Notion, is nothing but some great Excellence Manifested and Acknowledg'd; whence 'tis, that *it* makes so very strong an Impression upon intelligent Creatures, and the desire of *it*, hath so universal an Influence. More particularly,

1. The Glory of God is the Manifestation of the great and adorable *Excellencies* which are in the *Deity* both absolutely and relatively considered. When the *Vertues* (as the *Greek* Expression is, 1 *Pet.* ii. 10.) *of God are shown forth*, so as to be acknowledg'd and esteemed by his Creatures: When his inflexible Justice, and spotless Purity, his unsearchable Wisdom, and infallible Truth, his almighty Power, and inexhaustible Goodness do shine forth, and are set in a just Light, then the Glory of God appears in open view, *Num.* xiv. 21. God sweareth that *all the Earth should be filled with the Glory of the Lord*; because he intended to display his Justice and Holiness in punishing and consuming the murmuring *Israelites*. Thus 'tis said, *Psal.* cii. 16. *When the Lord buildeth up*

up Zion, *he ſhall appear in his Glory*, becauſe that work would manifeſt the Power and Veracity of God.

2. The glory of *Chriſt*, is the ſhewing forth that *Excellence* which belongs unto his *Mediatory Office*; accordingly, when he wrought his firſt Miracle at *Cana* he is ſaid to have *manifeſted forth his Glory*, *John* ii. 11. All the Evidences which bear witneſs unto his Prieſtly, or Regal, or Teaching Offices, do glorify the Redeemer, 2 *Pet.* i. 17.

3. It muſt be remembred, that the glory of the *Deity*, is diſtinct from that of the *Redeemer*; yet they are never ſeperated from, much leſs oppoſed unto each other. 'Tis otherwiſe, as to the glory of God, and of a Crature, theſe do often diſagree and claſh againſt each other. When *Herod* accepted an undue Honour from a flattering Croud; this took away the Honour that was due unto God, *Acts* xii. 23. but the honour that is given unto Chriſt, doth bring glory unto God, *John* xvii. 1. Theſe two are ſo inſeparably joyn'd together, that they can never be put aſunder: Let us now enquire,

2. How the *Sickneſs* and *Death* of thoſe who are the Friends of Chriſt, do bring

Glory unto God and the Redeemer: While our Eye is fixt only upon the dark ſide, (or ſuperfices) of this Object, we ſhall be tempted to put ſuch a queſtion, as once *Nathaniel* did concerning *Nazareth*, John i. 46. Can any good thing come from ſuch evil? Can ſo barren a ſoyl produce ſuch precious fruit as the glory of God? Can this dark and diſmal Cloud ſend forth ſuch a refreſhing Light? At the firſt view it ſeems diſhonourable unto God, when theſe Bodies, which are his Temples, are demoliſht and laid in the duſt; this, I ſay, ſeems a diſparagement unto him who rais'd and dwelt in 'em. When theſe pleaſant Plants which ſtood in the Courts of God are overturn'd, this ſeems a damage unto the Heavenly Husbandman. But notwithſtanding theſe objections of ſenſe, 'tis undeniably true, that the Sickneſs and Diſſolution of Chriſtians, do really contribute unto the glory of God and Chriſt; the evidences which confirm this, do relate both unto thoſe Chriſtians who are remov'd by Death, and unto thoſe who ſurvive.

1. With reſpect unto the Dying Friends of Chriſt themſelves: Their Sickneſs and Death do many ways bring glory unto God and the Redeemer.

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1. The Divine *Veracity* or *Truth* is glorified by executing the Primitive Sentence, which hath been given againſt all the Poſterity of fallen *Adam*. *Gen.* iii. 19. *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return.* A peculiar glory redounds unto God, when theſe declarations which ſignify his Councel and Purpoſe are punctually accompliſht. (As on the contrary, nothing is more diſhonourable in its own Nature than *Falſhood*, which is counted even by Lyars themſelves an intolorable reproach.) Compare *Num.* xiv. *v.* 21. with *v.* 35. The Death of every Chriſtian doth Seal unto the Truth of God.

2. The Divine *Holineſs* and hatred of Sin are honour'd by the Sickneſs and Death of thoſe Chriſtians who have provokt the Anger of God, tho they dye in Peace. We have memorable inſtances in *Moſes*, in *Joſiah*, and the *Corinthian* Chriſtians, ſome of whom were cut off by Death, tho not Condemned with the World, 1 *Cor.* xi. 30, 31. Concerning *Moſes* we read, that by his unadviſed Language he offended God: At one time he complain'd of his ſervice and burden, and deſired rather to dye, than bear it any longer, *Num.* xi. 14, 15. At another time he ſpoke with indecent Paſſion unto

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the *Israelites*; and then God pronounc'd the Arrest, which you read *Num.* xx. 12. that he should not bring the *Israelites* into the Promised Land: Now the executing of that Sentence did glorify God, because it manifested his Holiness, which could not behold the defiling blemishes that were in *Moses*, who was one of the most eminent favorites of God.

3. The Divine *Soveraignty* and *Dominion* are honour'd by the Obedience and Resignation of Sick and Dying Believers: When a Christian exercises that Submission unto the Orders of God, that he willingly drinks the bitterest Cup which his Father gives him; how Honourable must this be unto God? This last act of Obedience Crowns the whole Christian course; certainly there is no spectacle more grateful unto God, than a Christian cheerfully yeilding back his Soul unto him who gave it: 'Twas a resigning Obedience that rendred the Death of Christ *a Sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor* unto God, who was in a most eminent manner Glorified by it; Tho a dying Christian cannot offer an attoning Sacrafice, yet he is a kind of *Holocaust*, when his death is perfum'd with a chosen submission unto the dis-

disposing will of God. On this account *the Death of the Saints*, or (as the *Hebrew* word imports) the Favorites, *is precious in the sight of the Lord*, Psal. cxvi. 15.

4. The *Powerful Grace* of Christ is honour'd by the inward support and refreshment which sick and dying Christians receive from him; at a time when the daughters of Musick are brought low, and all the pleasures of Life are without relish; then to feel an invigorating strength which renews the inner Man, when the outer decays and is falling down; this magnifieth the Powerful grace of God, *who giveth power to the Faint, and to them that have no Might, encreaseth Strength*, Isa. xl. 29. A principle of Natural Courage will afford some support, but 'tis divine Grace alone which can enable a Christian to triumph over the pain and danger of a mortal Sickness, 2 *Cor.* v. 5, 6.

5. Especially God and Christ are glorified in the *Victory* which a Christian gains over Death: This last Enemy is a very Formidable one. An *Alexander* who could Encounter the vast Armies of *Asian* Monarchs, who had despised the Terror of Battles, in his last Sickness was so afraid of Death, that his Court was fill'd with Devines and Victims, Plut. Vit. Alex.

Victims, and all imaginable Methods were try'd to preserve his Life. When therefore a Christian, tho of the tender fearful Sex, is raised above the fear of Death, is *confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord*, as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* vi. 6. This doth highly Honour the grace and power of the Redeemer, through whom alone it is that a Christian is more than a Conqueror, *Rom.* viii. 36, 37.

6. The Redeemer is glorified in that *Blessedness* which he immediately confers upon the Souls of his deceased Friends: No sooner had the *Israelites* pass'd the *red Sea*, and got upon free Land, but they send up their joyful Praises, and mention how gloriously God had Triumphed over their Enemies: What Heart can conceive the Songs of Praise which Celebrate the Lamb, and him who sits upon the Throne, when one believing Soul is set free from the House of Bondage, and Transplanted into the Heavenly Country; when a Soul that was Imprpison'd and Fetter'd in a House of Clay, is received into the Heavenly Habitations which the Redeemer hath prepared: Surely if those who heard of the Conversion of *Paul*, glorified God in him, or on

his

his account; those who were witnesses and spectators of a far more surprizing Change, could not be wanting in their Admiration and Praises of that God who Crowns with unfading glory.

7. The Death of a Christian brings glory unto the Redeemer, as it is the occasion of that astonishing Operation, which will *raise the dissolved Body*, and transform it into the likeness of his own most glorious Body. The final Conquering of the last Enemy, must be exceeding glorious unto that Power which effects it. The Raising of *Lazarus*, and reinstating his Body in a perishing Life, did glorify the Redeemer, and this he had his Eye upon in making this Answer; What then must be the raising of a corruped Body unto a blessed Immortality? By which the Children of the Resurrection are made like the Angels of God. Read and consider that memorable passage 2 *Thes.* 1. 10. Let us now briefly Reflect upon the

2. Evidence which I propounded, viz. How the Sickness and Death of Christians glorify God, with respect unto them who survive, whether they be more nearly or distantly related: And

1. God is thus glorified on ſuch occaſions, becauſe he manifeſts his Divine Power in compenſating and ſupplying that Loſs. When uſeful and ſervicable Chriſtians are removed by Death, nothing but Almighty Power can fill up ſuch a void empty ſpace, and raiſe up others to carry on his work; ſo that the Church reſembles that Poetical Tree, in which as faſt as one Branch was broken off, another did ſpring in the ſame place: Thus when a *Moſes* dies, God finds a *Joſhua* who was qualified to ſucceed him: When a *David* is laid unto his Fathers and ſees Corruption, God fills his Throne with a *Salomon*.

2. The exercile of graces in ſurviving Relatives or Acquaintance, doth glorify God on ſuch occaſions: When Holy *Job* upon the ſurprizing Death of all his Children (at the ſame time) doth Adore the Soveraignty of God, and bleſſeth his Name, when he took his deareſt Comforts away; this did effectually refute the reproaching Accuſation of Satan, and brought a ſingular Honour to God: who is alſo

3. *Glorified* in the Comforting of thoſe who are troubled and caſt down by ſuch Providences: This is one glorious Cha-

racter

racter of the blessed God, *That he Comforteth those who are cast down*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 6. Did not his Hand bind up the Wound, no other could do it; all the consolations which a Creature can present are weak and ineffectual things; but the supports of the Heavenly Comforter are never more sensible than under the sense of Afflictive Providences, 2 *Cor.* i. 3, 4. In the

4. And last place, The Sickness and Death of Christians bring glory unto God, as they are servicable unto the Souls of them who survive: As those Fruits that fall from the Tree, and lye about it, make the Soyl more Fruitful; such sorrowful Providences bring excellent Instructions about our Duty, and powerful Arguments to excite us unto our great Work: What the Apostle saith concerning his *Bonds*, was equally true concerning his *Death*. They were *for the furtherance of the Gospel*, Phil. i. How many have owed their Conversion and Establishment unto the Counsels and Examples of dying Christians? The Histories of every Church abound with such instances. I should now have shew'd,

II. On what accounts this Consideration is sufficient to *Quiet* and *Support* a Christian

under such sorrowful Providences. Of this I shall give this threefold account,

1. That *Love* which a Christian bears unto God and Christ, makes their Honour dearer unto him than any Interest of his own; and consequently, the advancing of that will Sweeten all the Crosses that can oppress him. When *Jephtha's* Victory over the *Ammonites* had got him more than ordinary Honour; and this was so pleasing to his Daughter, that she was willing to endure the harsh effects of her Fathers Vow, *Jud.* x. 20. Such a Temper there was in the Apostle, when he could declare that his chief expectation and design was, that Christ might be Magnified in his Body, whether by Life, or Death. *Phil.* i. 20.

2. A Christian knows that when God and Christ are glorified, then the grand *Project* and *End* of God are attained. We are sure that the blessed God cannot design any gain or profit to himself in his actings, but his design is to get himself Glory, and it must be very delightful unto God, when this Counsel of God is accomplished.

3. A Christian obtains his own chief *Request* when God is Glorified; all his other Petitions are subordinate unto this: He remem-

remembers that the Hallowing or Glorifying of God's Name ſtands in the very firſt place in that Exemplar Prayer which Chriſt hath left unto the Church; and therefore when God doth glorify himſelf, tho in a way that is grievous unto the Human Nature, yet a Chriſtian Rejoyceth: And now it were eaſy to draw many inſtructive Inferences from this Anſwer made by Chriſt. As

1. It will follow from hence, that the ſurprizing Death of the moſt Holy and uſeful Perſons is no Objection againſt the Providence and Government of God. 'Twas uſual among the Heathens to Accuſe their gods; yea, ſome of 'em proceeded to deny the exiſtence and Providence of a Deity, becauſe ſome Excellent and Virtuous Perſons were taken away by a ſurprizing Death. The Epicurean who diſputes againſt Providence, thought his Queries unanſwerable, when he aſkt, Why (if there was a Providence) the two brave *Scipio's* were Routed and Slain by the *Carthaginians*, with ſeveral ſuch like Queſtions, which were more tolerable in the Gentiles who knew not God: but it is inexcuſable in thoſe who have the Oracles of God committed unto them, to think or ſpeak at ſuch a rate. *Applicat.*

Cicer. de N. D. l. 3.

2. What

2. What adorable Wisdom belongs unto the blessed God, who can glorify himself by those very events that seem most dishonorable unto him: 'Tis observ'd by the Apostle, that *the foolishness of God is wiser than men*, 1 Cor. i. 25. *i. e.* In those very events which seem inconsistent with Wisdom, wherein God seems to act foolishly, yet in them he (infinitely) surpasses all the skill and wisdom that are in men. The divine Wisdom can build Trophees upon those very places which seem to swallow it up. The cutting off the natural Branches, the casting away the Body of the *Jewish* Nation, at the first view appear'd dishonorable unto the Truth and Fidelity of God; but the consideration of this event draw from the Apostle that admiring Exclamation, *Rom.* xi. v. 33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledg of God!*

3. How vast is the distance between the Thoughts of God, and those of Men! *Isa.* lv. 8. The subject of the Text gives a memorable Instance: The Sisters of *Lazarus* might be apt to conclude that their Brother's Sickness and Death would be on various accounts dishonourable unto Christ. 1. As they seemed to import unkindness, or

or impotence in Christ, who on this occasion carry'd it, as if he either neglected his Friend, or was unable to help him; And 2. As they seem'd to argue the unprofitableness of Christ's Service. When *Lazarus* was Dead and lay'd in his Grave, those who knew the Friendship of the Redeemer unto him would be tempted to speak on this manner; "How little advantage hath "poor *Lazarus* got by his acquaintance "with, and service unto Christ, who if he "had Power to Recover and Prevent the "Death of his Sick Friend, has been guil-"ty of strange unkindness; but in the conclusion, the *Sickness* and Death of *Lazarus* did bring a far greater Honour unto Christ, than his Recovering would have done: That Miracle which was wrought in raising him from the Dead, did exalt the Name of Christ, and encreased the number of his Followers; take heed therefore of leaning unto your own understanding, but whenever the ways of God have a perplexing obscurity in them, imitate the Practice of the Psalmist, *Psal.* lxxiii. 17. Go into the *Sanctuary*, and view them in Scripture Light; this will discover a refreshing brightness in those events which have the most horror in them.

4. How

2. How real and great a difference doth Converting Grace make between a Christian, and the unbelieving World. The later are wholly insensible unto the consideration us'd in the Text; the glory of God and Christ have no efficacy to quiet and support their minds; Arguments taken from their own Reputation or Intrest, have some force to moderate Sorrow and keep it from excess; but the glorifying of God by their Crosses, is an Argument which hath no strength with them; whereas it hath the greatest with a Christian, to whom nothing else need be represented: Our Saviour well understood to whom he made the Answer in the Text; they were his sincere Disciples, who were capable of perceiving the force of this Consideration; which afterward our Saviour repeats unto *Martha*, v. 40. *Thou shouldest see the glory of God*: Unto a *Martha* this would be a grateful and transporting Spectacle, when a *Judas* had far rather see thirty pieces of Silver, (than this glory of God.) Let us try our selves by this Rule; this will discover our State and our Character, and whether our Patience under Tryals be a Christian Grace, or but a Philosophick Virtue; this later

later groweth from other Principles; when therefore our Minds are quieted under dejecting Providences, without having recourſe unto the ſupport of the Text, 'tis a ſad evidence that we are alienated from the Life of God: If the conſideration of his *Glory* cannot over-ballance the Pain and Loſs that we are expos'd to, we are very unlike to our Redeemer, whoſe troubled Soul was compoſed with this Thought, that his Father's Name would be glorified by his accurs'd Death, *John* xii. 27, 28.

5. Let us whom this ſorrowful occaſion hath drawn together (and all who but hear of it) give diligence to correſpond with the deſign that God hath in this ſevere Providence: Surely he hath not made this breach, only to open a paſſage unto ſorrow and compaſſion, much leſs to furniſh us with new matter of diſcourſe; No, he deſigns that we ſhould glorify him in our Hearts and Lives more than we have formerly done; And this leads me unto that *particular Application* which I propounded to ſpend ſome time in, and which will aſſiſt us in making that improvement of this Providence as will bring glory unto God. All that I ſhall add will fall under theſe following Directions.

1. Let us justify this severe Providence of God; 'Tis highly dishonourable unto him when we blame and accuse his ways as if they were not equal; as on the other hand 'tis Honourable to God, when we subscribe every *Arrest* that our Heavenly Judg hath pronounc't. 'Tis related concerning *Aaron*, that when his two Sons were cut off, he held his peace, *Lev.* x. 2, 3. He made no Objections against that tremendous severity of God, when he understood that He had glorified himself by that Act. Blessed be God who enableth the Relict of the Deceas'd, thus to glorify God: May this Instance of his Resignation very much exalt the Name of God, and bring Reputation unto strict and serious Religion. Let this conclusion be deeply fixt in all our Souls, that however severe the dealings of God are, they are always Righteous and Equal.

2. Let us Honour and Imitate the Holy Example of the Deceas'd Friend of Christ, the worthy Mrs. *Shower*. None I hope will expect a large Historical account of her Life, or a Funeral Encomiastick; this latter she needs not, for her own Works praise her in the gate, and are a more valuable Monument, than any made by Art. Her

Her *Parentage* and *Beauty*, her *Wit* and *Charms* of Converſation (tho even thoſe were Gifts from Above) muſt now be paſs'd over in ſilence; for all theſe are *Præda Mortis*, a Prey unto Death and the Grave; which conſideration ought to cure the undue Eſteem of them, that many profeſſing Chriſtians diſcover; and perhaps, few places are more guilty of this *Unchriſtian Error*, than this City, where it ſeems to be the chief Ambition of many, to out-vye others in every thing, rather than in real Holineſs, which is the only Ornament that Death cannot ſpoyl us of; accordingly I ſhall only take notice of thoſe Excellencies which do fit the dignifying Character of *Lazarus* unto her, *One whom Jeſus loved*: (And however uſeful and honourable the Love of our Acquaintance and Fellow-creatures may be unto us, yet at laſt this Character of Sick and Dying *Lazarus* will be more valued than any the moſt admir'd Titles of Honour.) To make good this Character, it will not be neceſſary to Deſcribe her in her Perſonal and Relative Capacities; in both which thoſe who know her will acknowledg that ſhe had not many equals. It will be enough to draw the few following Lineaments.

1. The Holy Wisdom which did shine in her Conduct, and which she discover'd, both in leaving her Native Land, to enjoy the advantages of Living in a Religious Family (to which she was Related,) and in the Choyce that she made when she changed her Condition: Neither the Prejudices of the Age, or the Advantage of other Offers, could hinder from accepting *One*, as the Partner of her Life, from whom she could expect the best Assistance in the Service of God, and the concerns of her Soul; and this she did at a time when there was no prospect of that Tranquility, which now encourageth Persons of his Character and Profession.

2. Her Conscientious Attendance upon the Publick Worship: Of this I am capable to give Witness, having had the opportunity of Living a considerable time under the same Roof; and have observ'd how her Love unto the Solemn Assemblies, made her overcome many difficulties, which are pleaded by others in excuse of their neglect; neither the Heat or Cold of the Season, nor the hazard to her Health, (especially when great with Child) could induce her to lose any Opportuity of waiting at

the Gates of Wiſdom; ſuch Advantages were Pleaſant, and ſuch Seaſons were refreſhing unto her Soul.

3. The Acquaintance ſhe had with Secret Religion: She was not one of thoſe Profeſſors who ſhut up their Religion within the Temple Walls, where they take it up, and leave it at their departure; No, ſhe made many ſecret Viſits unto her Heavenly Bridegroom, and from him obtain'd that Wiſdom and Modeſty, and other Virtues which Adorn'd her Converſation.

4. Her ſubmiſſion unto the diſpoſing Will of God, and the comforting hopes ſhe had, do compleat the Character *of one whom Jeſus Loved* in this world, and hath now receiv'd in the other, where ſhe is plac'd out of the reach of Sin and Sorrow, of Child-bearing Pains and Child-bed Sickneſs, and where no Clouds ſhall ever interrupt the Light of God, and of the Lamb; But if we deſire to meet her there, we muſt imitate her Faith and Holineſs. And

3. Laſtly, Let us glorify God by receiving the Inſtruction which this ſorrowful Providence preſents to us.

1. Concerning the *Uncertainty of Life*; when ſo Bright and Vigourous a Flame is ſud-

ſuddenly Extinguiſht, who can entertain a juſt expectation of a long Life? What folly muſt it be to reckon upon many years, when our Lives are in ſo perpetual hazard? Let us *number our days aright*, and fix upon our Hearts that Concluſion which *David* made, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 18. *Our days on the Earth are as a ſhadow, and there is no abiding*; which conſideration had no queſtion a ſtrong Influence upon that famous Liberality toward the Service of God, which is related in that Chapter; and it would make us more active in his Service.

2. Learn the *Vanity of Creature-aſſiſtances*; could the Love of a Husband, or the Counſels of Phyſitians, or the Service of Friends have been Effectual, there had not been an occaſion for this ſorrougful ſolemnity; 'tis become Natural to us, to place an undue confidence in Created helps; exceeding apt we are to truſt in Riches or Wiſdom, and in the means of Health, when in themſelves they are empty and broken Ciſterns, which will ſend us away diſapointed and aſham'd.

3. The neceſſity of ſpeedy *Preparation* for *Death* and *Judgment*; every Funeral preſſeth this upon thoſe who are witneſſes of it.

it. Many of you have lately heard * the Nature and Importance of this great work, and ſo many have Diſcourſed concerning it, that I need not enlarge: It hath not been without a deſign worthy of the Wiſdom of God, that our Deceas'd Friend ſhould not be called out of the World by Death, until ſhe was known unto two Societies in this City, whereby her Death is rendred more Inſtructive. And now that a Funeral Sermon hath drawn Multitudes to attend here, you will receive no advantage from it, yea 'twill prove very hurtful to you, if you do not ſeriouſly engage that you will give all diligence to prepare for Death and Eternity. This work is never unſeaſonable, and nothing can be pleaded to excuſe the neglect of it.

* From my Br. S. on thoſe words, *Matt.* 24. 44. *Be you alſo ready.*

You who are Young and in the Flower of your days, do not put off this Affair; ſay not as the negligent *Jews* once did concerning the Rebuilding of their Temple, *The time is not come* Hagg. i. 2. The approach of Death will make you of another mind, when you hear the ſound of that Meſſengers Feet, who will bring you to Judgment; you will then conclude that this is the *one Thing neceſſary*, that all the Concerns

cerns of Trade, and Offices of Civility, are meer Trifles in compariſon with this work, upon which your everlaſting Welfare depends. What meaneſt thou then, *O Sleeper!* ariſe and call upon God and ſtir up thy ſelf that thou Periſh not; look often down into the Chambers of the Grave; dwell (by ſolemn Thoughts) in the Valley of the Shadow of *Death*: be not affraid leſt this ſhould make thee Melancholly or Diſtracted, for this Path leads unto the moſt deſirable Joy. (Tho' no Diſtractedneſs is to be feard, in compariſon of the *Madneſs* which unrepenting careleſs Sinners are guilty of, and whom Death will find unprepared.) And when a view of your latter End has compoſ'd and awaken'd your Souls, then put the Queſtion to your ſelves, which you find 2 *Pet.* iii. 2. *Seeing that all theſe things ſhall be Diſſolved* (or are *Diſſolving*) *what manner of Perſons ought we to be in all manner of Converſation and Godlineſs?*

THE END.